



**Joint Meeting of the Commissioner's Task Force to Develop a Performance-Based School Accountability System
and the NH DOE Accountability Task Force
February 14, 2011, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, Room 15
NOTES**

Next Meeting: Monday, March 14, 2011, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, the Walker Building (Fruit Street)

ATTENDING:

	Virginia Barry, Ph.D.	Commissioner of Education
X	Brian Cochrane	Director of Assessment and Accountability Nashua School District
X	Paul Couture	Principal, Stevens High School, Claremont
	Jerome Frew	Superintendent, Kearsarge Regional School District
	Molly Kelly	Former Chair, Education Committee, NH Senate
	Daphne Kenyon	NH State Board of Education
X	Paul Leather	Deputy Commissioner, NH Department of Education
X	Scott Marion	National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Dover
	Judith Fillion	Director, Division of Program Support, NH Department of Education
	Edward Murdough	Bureau of School Approval, NH Department of Education
X	Kathleen Murphy	Director, Division of Instruction, NH Department of Education
X	Emma Rous	Former Chair, Education Committee, NH House of Representatives
X	Vincent Spiotti	Bethlehem School Board, Bethlehem, NH
X	Franklin Gould	NH House of Representatives, Lebanon, NH
X	Deborah Wiswell	Bureau of Accountability, Curriculum and School Improvement, Division of Instruction, NH Department of Education

Accountability (AYP) Task Force (in addition to those on the Commissioner's Task Force)

District Representatives: Donna Crook (MSD); Kathy Stavenger (SNHU); Helene Bickford; Steve Zdravec (Portsmouth); Heather Cummings (Gov Wentworth); Chris Demers (Concord)

NH DOE: Merry Fortier, Mary Lane, Marcia McCaffery, Ginny Clifford, Tim Kurtz, Susan Randall

NH DOE Consultants: Karen Laba; Keith Burke
Center for Assessment: Scott Marion
Measured Progress: Shannan Douglas

Meeting Objectives:

- ◆ Review Jan. 21 discussion of "Level II" (locally defined) performance indicators
- ◆ Learn about the i3 performance assessment project in NH and potential use for "Level II"
- ◆ Examine corrected state-wide data and the designation of "adequate"
- ◆ Offer recommendations for additional dissemination activities/ approaches

NOTES

1. Welcome and Review of the Agenda: Deb welcomed members and provided an overview of the agenda and rationale for the agenda items. In a brief update on the "input" system, Deb reported that there are a few districts who have yet to submit their responses, but the Department staff have begun to review submissions. Yet to be decided are the specific criteria for judging whether schools have "met" adequacy requirements.

2. Summary of Jan 21 Level II Discussion

In considerations of those who could not attend the Jan. 21 meeting due to the weather, Deb shared the highlights of the discussion of Level II indicators.

1. There are 17 schools without 2 years of NECAP data so Student Growth Percentile (SGP) measures cannot be calculated. These schools will have to submit other performance data to substitute for the calculated SGP. Most of these include schools serving a combination of grades K through 3.
2. Another set of schools who might opt to report on a "Level II" measure (or set of measures) are those whose scores on the "Level I" (state-defined) indicators do not meet the standard for adequacy. These schools may wish to substitute other data to demonstrate they provide "an opportunity for an adequate education."
3. Deb referred to the Part 1 and Part 2 handout with the list of possible performance indicators for Level 2. After the Jan. 21 meeting, a small subgroup of Dept. staff examined recent school improvement plans and compiled a list of assessments currently in use across the state. That list of measures is listed on the back of the handout. The group did not proceed to identify the range and quality of these measures as possible alternatives. That work will need to be done if the Task Force decides to provide a list of Level II suggested measures as part of the guidance to schools.
4. The subgroup discussed possible criteria for judging a Level II submission by a school. Several criteria are listed on the handout, based on the interview with Mark Joyce. One suggestion for a process for judging submissions is to use the example of a panel of educators and Department staff as is done currently for AYP appeals.
5. At the Jan. 21 meeting, the question of the number of times a school could submit Level II arose. The Commissioner suggested a two year period after which the school would need to demonstrate adequate performance on the state defined indicators. The rationale for a time limit would reinforce the expectation that state wide measures of performance apply to all schools and their students. The use of alternatives in the form of Level II submissions should be interim or time-limited.

Discussion:

-- Karen asked if NEASC could be an option for schools choosing to submit that accreditation documentation as a Level II option (not listed on the handout as a

- possible measure); she asked for further discussion when Jerry Frew (Superintendent and NH School Administrators Association) is in attendance
- Paul Leather reported that there is a bill in consideration at the legislature to allow NEASC as a substitute for approval/ accountability. Merry Fortier mentioned that this bill is moving quickly through the legislature and if members of the task force wish to offer comments, they should be presented soon.
 - a two year window would allow time for schools to demonstrate improvement on the state standards for performance
 - new legislation under review may enact a change in the "either/or" decision on Input and Performance components of the NH Accountability System.
 - Keith suggested giving examples to the potential submitters to help in understanding the way their indicators will be judged
 - Representative Frank Gould requested that information about Level II be disseminated to the legislators since Level II is not in the law and the current body is likely unfamiliar with this option.

Deb posed a question to the group: will an acceptable judgment on a Level II submission result in a "Yes" for the Performance Based Accountability System?

- *-- Steve Zadavec indicated the two year limit for substituting local indicators (Level II) makes allowing those indicators to result in a 'Yes' more reasonable. Chris Demers added that it demonstrates respect for local values yet holds the school ultimately accountable for state-wide standards after a two year endeavor to improve using local measures.
- Frank asked if the school district should make the final decision on meeting the requirements of adequacy, rather than having the state say "2 means you failed" and "3 means you passed". He made the point that if the state publishes the data for the community to examine, the local community can then decide to submit Level II evidence to demonstrating progress.
- Paul Couture asked if the discussion was moving toward requiring a "plan for improvement" or simply alternate data. Deb responded that Level II was referring to alternate data that already exists that reflects an alternate means by which to demonstrate adequacy. The legislation includes mention of required actions subsequent to a judgment of "not met" for adequacy.
- Tim Kurtz reported that it will be a number of years before growth measures are available for high schools under the new national assessments being developed. State level indicators of growth will be limited.
- In response to Tim's reminder, Paul Leather proposed that there be a commitment to review the Performance Based system in two years' time – both the Level I State Defined and Level II Locally Defined indicators. During that review a determination can be made whether to revise or change the requirements for the Level II submissions in light of possible changed in state assessment procedures.

3. i3 Performance Assessment Project:

Last meeting, Paul Leather mentioned a project underway in a number of NH districts that has relevance in discussions of alternative ways to measure student performance. He presented an overview of different measures of accountability that reflect "next generation learning." These measures differ from the traditional method of establishing academic content standards. "Next generation" defines the expectations that students be critical thinkers, able to gather and analyze data, and apply knowledge to realistic problems. The work Paul references involves nine schools in NH who are looking for better ways to assess student learning.

Paul presented a series of slides summarizing the findings and recommendations of research sponsored by the Stupski foundation.

Highlights:

- *Three domains: knowledge; applied skill and contextual understanding; life and career navigational capacities
- *"New goal line" needed that addresses all three domains
- * What's working in the highest achieving countries? Conclusion: emphasis on higher order skills, increase project based work; expand assessment of higher order intellectual skills; assess *of*, *as*, and *for* learning; arm teachers with learning progressions and other tools to implement this vision. (An example of this kind of 'test' would be a driving test, which requires the applicant to demonstrate knowledge of the rules of the road and also performance, the ability to operate the vehicle according to those rules.)

Current assessments look at the 'knowing' domain, but not the 'knowing how' aspect promoted by the "next generation" concept.

Paul introduced a description of The New England Network for Personalization and Performance (The NETWORK): This NETWORK is dedicated to improving the assessment of student learning in keeping with principles such as those in the Stupski report. Eight districts and 9 NH schools are involved in this endeavor. Some have received substantial grants to work on building school level systems for this project. Paul's presentation will be posted alongside these notes.

4. Sample Reports Revised, Corrected

Deb distributed the revised sample Performance Reports for Gray Lake Elementary School and Blue Hills High School. She pointed out the revisions and asked for suggestions to improve the presentation.

Comments:

- improve the layout to avoid flipping front to back
- several corrections were pointed out on the sample for Gray Lake
- discussion of the amount of information the data provides about a school's strengths and gaps; the report can show schools with high overall 'scores' which have substantial gaps between student groups.

5. Update on Latest Data

Scott reviewed the results of the latest state wide data run using all the "Level I" state defined indicators as selected by this committee. A statewide distribution of elementary/ middle schools shows the average 'score' = 2.87, on a scale of 1-4; the distribution shows an approximate normal distribution. 9% (12) of ES/MS schools earned a 'score' below 2.0.

The high school average is different because Level I for high schools uses different measures. Average for high schools = 2.40. There are 16 schools below 2.00 (18.9%). In deciding what the cut score will be, important to look at the differences that are important.

Deb distributed actual reports using the data set Scott collected. The reports are not yet ready for distribution because final decisions have not been made on the system. The purpose of sharing the 2 sample elementary schools, 2 sample middle schools, and 3 sample high schools is to give the Task Force members an idea of the schools who earn scores around possible cut points. Members should use what they know about these

actual schools and communities and consider the question: what scores should represent "adequacy"?

Suggestions/ questions:

- the school profile at the top is confusing as to whether it lists students in the school or only those whose test results are presented in the report; consider including the percentages for the whole school; PLUS the data for the students whose test results are reflected in the report;
- consider adding and "n" for each tested group to clarify how many students are in each group
- the concept of "tested" versus whole school won't apply to grad rate and dropout rate
- consider two pages, with academic and non academic on separate pages, with rubrics / definitions alongside (avoids "flipping" pages)
- will the cut points/ rubric points ever change? Deb responded that they will likely be reviewed periodically for validity. As we've developed the system during these meetings, the points we've allocated to each score range has been based on what we "believe" is a reasonable value for that measure. Because of the judgment leading to the point assignments, we will need to analyze the impact of the point values and consider adjusting in the future if conditions change.
- technical documentation must include an explanation of the year of data since the best available data may be one or two years old; also include a description of the rationale for each indicator.

6. Proposed Legislation Review and Recommendations: SB 172

Deb directed attention to the proposed legislation language to be submitted by Molly Kelly about the accountability system. She asked those present to review and offer suggestions.

Comments:

- remove mention of publishing a ranked list; instead report each school's score
- the language is fairly straightforward but be sure to keep the information presented to lawmakers clear, simple and direct.

7. Federal Discussion of ESEA Reauthorization

Merry Fortier reported on a recent congressional hearing on ESEA reauthorization. Key features included discussion of growth models, with references to the Colorado growth model on which the NH Performance Based system "student growth percentiles" is modeled. Indiana Commissioner Tony Bennett described how his state is moving toward an integrated growth system as part of school accountability system. Merry noted that seeing a growth system being implemented within an actual state encourages optimism about the direction NH is headed with its Performance Based system.

Next Steps

1. Deb and Karen will correct the sample school reports and adjust the format based on the group's recommendations.
2. Deb invited all who can attend to come to the legislative hearing on February 22 on SB 175 about the NH accountability system.

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